



---

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, August 2, 2006  
Contact: Rose Lynch, Communications Director, (608) 266-6753

## **Department of Workforce Development Secretary Visits Sheboygan Hmong Mutual Assistance Association**

**Sheboygan** - On July 27, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman visited the Sheboygan Hmong Mutual Assistance Association. Secretary Gassman met with Association President Dr. John Yang and board members to discuss the status of the resettlement. She also visited a class of middle and high school students learning to speak and write Hmong. The class of 15 students from the Sheboygan area meets twice a week for two months during the summer.

Secretary Gassman's visit highlighted the successful resettlement of the Hmong in the Sheboygan area. She attributed the success in large part to the collaboration of the Sheboygan Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, other local agencies and organizations, local government officials, and the community, which openly welcomed the new arrivals.

"Wisconsin has a long and well-documented record of providing effective and culturally responsive services to the Hmong for nearly three decades. Almost 350 Hmong have chosen to settle in Sheboygan since 2004 and the response of this community has been heartwarming. This community effort has allowed the refugees to adjust quickly, join the workforce and give back to the community," said Secretary Gassman.

DWD manages and monitors contracts for programs designed to assist refugees arriving in Wisconsin. Comprehensive, bilingual, and bicultural employment services are provided by partner agencies to assist refugees in finding employment and settling into the community. Other supportive services provided by local agencies are health screening, English as a Second Language classes, and family-focused case management.

- end -